an optical system for dividing a beam in one direction; and

an optical system for overlapping divided laser beams,

wherein in said direction a width of said optical system for dividing is narrower than the maximum width of the laser beam before being divided.

(Amended) A laser irradiation apparatus comprising:

a cylindrical lens group for dividing a laser beam in one direction; and

an optical system for overlapping divided laser beams,

wherein a portion of the cylindrical lens of said cylindrical lens group is shielded.

Please add new claims 5-17 as follows.

An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said lens is a cylindrical lens group.

An apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said optical system for dividing said laser beam is a cylindrical lens group.

An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein at least cylindrical lens comprises quartz ground glass.

A laser irradiation apparatus comprising:

a beam generating unit for generating a laser beam such that a cross section of said laser beam extends in both width and longitudinal directions;

a cylindrical lens group for dividing said laser beam in one of said width and longitudinal directions;

an optical system for overlapping divided laser beams; and

a slit located between said beam generating unit and said cylindrical lens group for making at least an edge of the laser beam in a straight line which is parallel to a longitudinal direction of each cylindrical lens in said cylindrical lens group.

~~9~~ 8. An apparatus according to claim ~~8~~ 7, further comprising a means for irradiating the overlapped laser beam to a substrate.

~~10~~ 9. An apparatus according to claim ~~9~~ 8, wherein said substrate is selected from the group consisting of a glass substrate, a quartz substrate, a ceramic substrate, a semiconductor substrate, a plastic substrate, and an organic resin substrate.

~~11~~ 10. A laser irradiation apparatus comprising:

a beam generating unit for generating a laser beam such that a cross section of said laser beam extends in both width and longitudinal directions;

a cylindrical lens group for dividing said laser beam in one of said width and longitudinal directions;

an optical system for overlapping divided laser beams; and

a slit located between said beam generating unit and said cylindrical lens group for making at least an edge of the laser beam in a straight line which is vertical to a width direction of said cylindrical lens group.

~~12~~ 11. An apparatus according to claim ~~11~~ 10, further comprising a means for irradiating the overlapped laser beam to a substrate.